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PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

SESSION 1864-65.

Third Meeting, December 12th, 1864.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*Captain Felix Jones, H.M.I.N.; John W. Bone, Esq.; Dr. John Doran; and J. B. Zwecker, Esq.*

ELECTIONS.—*Captain Alexander G. Bax; Alexander Grant Dallas, Esq., (late Governor of Rupert's Land); Francis S. Dutton, Esq.; William Meriton Eaton, Esq.; William Gladstone, Jun., Esq.; Josiah John Harding, Esq.; William Drew Harving, Esq.; George Herbert, Esq.; Edward Kimber, Esq., PH. DR.; Samuel Lucas, Esq.; F. H. Ridley, Esq.; Rienzi Geisman Walton, Esq., C.E.*

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY.—Captain Cook's 'Voyages of Discovery,' presented by the Editor, John Barrow, Esq. 'The Nile Basin,' presented by Captain R. F. Burton. Dias del Castillo's 'History of the Conquest of Mexico,' translated by Lockhart. Continuation of 'Journals,' 'Transactions,' &c.

ACCESSIONS TO THE MAP-ROOM.—Ordnance Maps—sheets, 448 inclusive.

The PRESIDENT, before proceeding with the papers of the evening, called attention to a magnificent work which had been presented to the Library by the Emperor of Brazil, who had been recently elected an honorary member of the Society. His Imperial Majesty was a warm patron of geographical science, and had taken great interest in the production of the work on the table, which gave a very detailed description, with charts, of the River San Francisco for upwards of a thousand miles of its length. The survey on which it was founded and the execution of the work would do honour to any Government. This valuable gift was presented through the medium of Mr. J. C. Fletcher, who had written the later editions of Kidder and Fletcher's 'Brazil and the Brazilians,' the most complete book extant on the Empire of Brazil. Mr. Fletcher was now preparing a paper on a recent exploration of the river Purus, a great tributary of the Amazons, which would be read before the Society at some future time. As that gentleman was present, he hoped he would say a few words respecting this exploration and other scientific works which had been undertaken during the reign of the present Emperor.

Mr. FLETCHER said : A few weeks ago, on returning from South America, the Baron de Penedo, the late Minister-Plenipotentiary from Brazil to Great Britain, desired that this work, published at the expense of the Brazilian Government, under the patronage of the Emperor, should be presented to the Royal Geographical Society. The river San Francisco is one of the mighty streams which rise in the same range of mountains whence some of the tributaries of the Amazons and the La Plata have their sources. Its mouth lies between the provinces of Pernambuco and Bahia. For 400 miles from the sea it is not navigable ; but beyond that distance, above the falls of Paulo Alfonzo, the Niagara of Brazil, the river is navigable for 800 miles. The railroads which are now penetrating into the interior from the coast have for their aim to tap the upper waters of this stream, in order that the products of that rich region may find an outlet to the sea. In this valley cotton is raised, the greater portion of it cultivated by free half-breeds. The work presented is a remarkable specimen of art, considering that it was wholly got up in the city of Rio Janeiro by native printers and lithographers. Not only this, but other enterprises gave evidence of the character of the Emperor, who in moral qualities as well as in intellectual acquirements, occupied a high position amongst monarchs. As soon as he came to the throne he established the Brazilian Geographical and Historical Institute ; and at its fortnightly sittings His Majesty was always present, having his place at the right of the President. That Society published reports of some interesting expeditions, among others the one which was sent up the Madeira River, a branch of the Amazons, having its junction 1000 miles from the main stream, yet larger than the Mississippi. Prince Adalbert of Prussia, who in 1840 and 1841 ascended the Amazons and made other explorations in South America, was the first who gave notice to the world of the Emperor's intellectual ability. He was not only a chemist, a geologist, and a natural philosopher, but a thorough-read man in the scientific and literary doings of the world.

The first Paper was entitled :

1. *On the Islands of Kalatoa and Puloweh, North of Flores.* By JOHN CAMERON, Esq., F.R.G.S.

KALATOA is one of a group of six islands lying about seventy miles distant from the north coast of Flores, in the Java sea, and in an area of sunken coral-reefs forming a tableland beneath the surface of the ocean. It is about 8 miles long by 5 in breadth, and has an elevated undulating surface, covered with vegetation, and presenting a most inviting aspect. The author, who visited it about four years ago, found it uninhabited, and therefore could not corroborate the statement of Horsburgh, that it was peopled by a savage race who had massacred several crews of vessels which had been wrecked on its coasts. He was not successful even in finding fresh water on the island, although he traversed it with the assistance of a boat's crew for a long distance in various directions. The island appeared to be formed wholly of coral-rock, with beds of black peaty loam in the crevices, and beaches of white sand in the little harbours of the coast. The other islands of the group were afterwards visited, and found to be also destitute of fresh